

Pit River Watershed Alliance Watershed Management Program

Pit River Watershed Alliance



*A water quality monitoring location on the Pit River
in the remote Stone Coal Valley.*

Award Amount

\$542,456

Watershed

Pit River Watershed

County

Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, and Siskiyou Counties

CALFED Region

Sacramento Valley Region

Legislative Districts

US Congress: 4

State Assembly: 2

State Senate: 1

Purpose

Conduct a comprehensive watershed program with significant public outreach and capacity-building functions.

Project Goals

- Expand the Central Modoc Resource Conservation District monitoring program.
- Evaluate water quality by gathering and analyzing physical, chemical, biological, and human impact information of past and current land uses.
- Lead a community-based, cooperative rangeland management project.
- Conduct a paired watershed study on juniper management.
- Build capacity of the Pit River Watershed Alliance through education, outreach, and strengthening of partnerships.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

The Pit River supplies 20% of the water that flows into the Bay-Delta via the Sacramento River. This program ensures that that water is of higher quality by conducting a watershed assessment and monitoring program to guide decisions for water quality enhancement projects. This program is designing a system for storing water in the uplands for more timely releases to Bay-Delta users. Through the substantial public outreach components of this program, and the development of a comprehensive watershed assessment, the Alliance teaches stakeholders about the health of their watershed and how to assess it. It also provides stakeholders with information to make land management decisions on a watershed scale, and increase their capacity to meet the goals of the CALFED Program and the Alliance.

Project Overview

The Pit River Watershed Alliance (Alliance) is a volunteer grass-roots organization whose mission is to foster partnerships that achieve integrated long-term cultural, economic, and environmental health of the watershed through active community participation. The Pit River Watershed is 2 million acres in size and is located in northeastern California. The water from the Pit River Watershed makes up about 20% of the water that enters the Sacramento River, flowing eventually to the Bay-Delta.

Currently, no comprehensive baseline assessment incorporating data from both private and public land exists for the Pit River Watershed. The Alliance is leading the effort to conduct a watershed assessment upon which future management decisions can be based. The assessment includes gathering past and current data on all elements of the watershed, such as water, soils, forest lands, agriculture, wildlife, and recreation. It includes new and prior monitoring data, and identifies what additional data is needed. This effort provides the baseline information necessary to do a thorough assessment, from which current conditions and future trends can be estimated and potential future projects identified.

This is a comprehensive program with many additional components. These components each incorporate significant public outreach and local watershed management capacity enhancement. They include an expansion of the Central Modoc Resource Conservation District monitoring program, including water quality monitoring; a community-based, cooperative rangeland management project that will provide for livestock grazing in a manner that protects water quality in the Warner Mountains; a paired watershed study on juniper management in seeps and spring areas and its effects on water storage and release on a watershed scale; and building capacity of the Pit River Watershed Alliance through education, outreach, and the strengthening of partnerships.



Jeff Steinman takes a water sample to detect nutrients in Horse Creek.

Contact Information

Mark Steffek
Pit River Watershed Alliance
806 West 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
Telephone: (530) 233-8868
E-mail: mark.steffek@ca.usda.gov